

# **A Homegrown Innovator:** **How Paul Marchese Embraced** **His Passion For Technology To** **Bring Cutting-Edge Solutions To** **His Hometown And Beyond With** **Marchese Computer Products**

**H**ave you ever noticed how some people are lucky enough to turn their childhood hobbies and interests into a full-blown career? They get to not only do what they love but also provide people with much-needed solutions for their business's pain points. Paul Marchese is a true example of this. From being a young boy working in his grandfather's appliance shop to a teenager asked to source school computers and now the proud owner of Marchese Computer Products, he would have never guessed his end destination. And yet, when you hear his story, it all makes perfect sense. Today, Paul and his team at Marchese Computer Products not only get to service their hometown of Batavia but well beyond, poised to continue helping small and medium-sized businesses in Western and Central New York with their security and technology solutions for years to come.

## **EARLY INFLUENCES**

Paul was born and raised in Batavia, New York, and is no stranger to hard work. "When I think of my childhood, one thing that sticks out to me is my grandfather," Paul begins. "He was such a hard worker—I attribute my adaptability and perseverance to him—and he taught me how to look at things, take it one step at a time, and go from there." Paul continues, "I also worked with him in his business called Batavia Washing Machines, which was an appliance parts distribution store. We sold parts for washers, dryers, refrigerators, microwaves—you name it—and we would also fix them." Under his grandfather's wing, Paul was raised to have an entrepreneurial mind, learning about business including inventory, employees, and even the struggles of business ownership from an early age.

But Paul's grandfather wasn't the only impactful mentor he had as a young man. "My Scout Master, Weldon Hilchey, was another big influence on me," Paul explains. "He taught me a very important life lesson which was to pay attention and look. He always said, if you don't actually pay attention, you'll miss a great deal. And that really stuck with me—even through my [time with my] business and how I approach our customers today. It's critical to truly listen with the intention of understanding how their business operates and what they are having difficulty with or would like to be more efficient with."

Truthfully, Paul's reputation as a "tech guy" began early. "Our high school math department had a teletype terminal connected to a



mainframe that I became very familiar with,” says Paul. “Then, in eleventh grade, an administrator asked me to help pick out school computers at the Apple Store in Rochester.” After a surreal moment of “Me?!”, Paul consented when they said, “Yes, because you know more than any of our teachers.” And honestly? They were right. This sparked a new idea that fused his entrepreneurial roots with his technological intrigue: starting a side hustle selling floppy disks and helping people with computer support. So technically, Marchese Computer Products was born in 1981—when Paul was just 17 and still in high school.

## A BOLD CAREER CHOICE

Upon completing high school, Paul won an award for having the highest math and science average, earning guaranteed acceptance to the University of Rochester. “My father is a CPA, and he actually went there for his grad school,” mentions Paul, “So I went into chemical engineering but switched when offered the chance to obtain a new degree in Computer Science under the mathematics program. I took programming and ended up learning 10 programming languages.” He was also the only freshman ever allowed to work for the computing department at the University of Rochester and a founding member of the Computer Interest Floor—quite the accomplishments!

After graduation, Paul faced a career crossroads. “I was offered a significant salary as a Network Engineer at Western New York Computing Services,” recalls Paul, “but I turned it down. I really wanted to work for myself and grow the business I’d already started.” So, he went full-time with Marchese Computer Products in 1986, officially launching the company as a break-fix technology provider.

“Honestly, those first few years were the hardest,” says Paul. “In the beginning, I asked my uncle, who owned a local pizzeria here in Batavia, for a \$1,500 loan for half of the company, but he laughed at me, saying, quote, ‘Computers are just a fad.’ Now, I always bug him by asking if I can give him \$1,500 for half of his business. But, at the time, I had to go down to the bank to get a loan with my dad, where I got a loan for way more money, and that was really stressful, not being sure I could pay it back.” However, Paul had one thing on his side—he had found a perfect gap in the technology market in his hometown of Batavia. “When I came back to Batavia after college, there were two places selling computers in town. One was a music store and the other an office supply store, neither truly knowledgeable. So, I asked my grandfather if I could use a corner of his store and started selling computers full force.”

## A MODERN-DAY MARCHESE COMPUTER

Since those early days, Marchese Computer Products has evolved immensely, but its core values remain. They are now the area’s premier managed service provider and technology consultant. They handle the day-to-day responsibilities for their clients’ computers and technology including monitoring, patching, security, and maintenance. Paul also kept his retail roots by

keeping a small retail space that serves the community. As Paul said, “I will always be there to help out my community and never abandon them. It truly keeps us connected to the community in a hands-on way. Our goal is to build lasting relationships and support our customers’ needs with our trusted expertise.”

And between being the only data center in the GLOW (Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming) region as well as licensed and certified to install video and burglar alarms, Marchese Computer really is the only call you need to make for your technology needs. Paul adds, “We don’t do cookie-cutter solutions because there is no such thing. We listen to our clients and develop custom solutions to meet their goals using technology that fits in their budget. Our goal is to remove the burden of IT from our clients’ plate so they can spend their time growing their business.”

Paul’s drive to support the local community can also be seen through his dedication to sharing valuable insights and staying at the forefront of technology. “For years, I’ve attended computer conventions to make sure my clients have access to the latest innovations,” asserts Paul. “And since 1997, I’ve hosted a radio show with the sole purpose of passing on my knowledge.” He’s also an active volunteer, a Rotarian, and has released several best-selling books on cybersecurity, with another one coming out in March 2025.

A final—and arguably most important—way that Marchese Computer stays on the cutting edge of the technology world is by empowering its employees. “I always preach: adapt, improvise, and overcome,” states Paul. “That’s why we always cross-train our technicians so they can look at problems holistically—just like my mentors taught me.” He continues, “I also think of my employees like family, so anything I can do to help them attain a new skill or become more knowledgeable, I’ll happily do.” Looking ahead, Paul plans to continue expanding Marchese Computers to help even more businesses with their technology needs. “I’d like to grow our business to two-and-a-half times the size,” says Paul. “We’ve already been around for 43 years and can boast that we’ve had zero clients compromised within that time, so I’m looking forward to what the next years bring.”

Ultimately, Paul’s journey from a young boy tinkering in his grandfather’s shop to a visionary entrepreneur speaks volumes about his dedication and passion. But his story is not just about personal success; it’s about uplifting a community and providing essential services that empower businesses to thrive. With a foundation built on hard work and a genuine desire to help others, Marchese Computer Products is more than just a company. It’s a beacon of technological innovation for businesses throughout Batavia and beyond.

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